

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

I. Status of the Claims

Claims 3 and 5 were previously canceled.

Claim 18 is canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter therein.

Claims 20-22 are added without the introduction of new matter.

Claims 1 and 6 are amended without the introduction of new matter.

Claims 1, 2, 4, 6-17 and 19-22 are currently pending.

II. Status of the Office Action

Applicants added claims 17-19 in the previous response dated July 24, 2006. Applicants note that the Examiner has not presented rejections to these claims and did not acknowledge their entry into the present application anywhere in the Office Action, including the Office Action Summary Sheet (PTOL-326). Applicants note that pursuant to at least MPEP § 707.07(i) each claim must be addressed and its rejection put forth by the Examiner. Claim 17-19 were not addressed in the present Office Action. Further, Applicants note that the Examiner still presents rejections to claim 3, although claim 3 was canceled in the response filed July 24, 2006. Applicants request that the Finality of the present Office Action be reversed and a new Action issued addressing all present claims.

Additionally, in the interest of furthering prosecution, and in good faith, Applicants put forth the present amendments and arguments for the Examiner's consideration in issuing a new, corrected, Office Action addressing all claims.

In contrast, Johnson, Fig. 2 and column 2, lines 36-41, discloses that the protruded area (i.e., the raised cylindroidal centrally disposed portion 3) slopes inward to be “folded along fold line 2 with the inwardly folded faces secured to each other by adhesive securement dots 4 or similar securement means.” The inward slope of the protruded area forms a narrowing of the protruded area and does not have a widest portion closest to the flat area. There are no teachings or suggestion to motivate one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the shape of the interlabial pad in Johnson to the shape as recited in amended claim 1.

Additionally, as discussed above, the formulas recited in claim 1 do define a change the performance of the present invention in relation to the prior art.

Therefore, the present invention recited in amended claim 1 is patentably distinguishable over Johnson.

Claim 4 was previously amended to clarify subject matter recited. Claim 4 recites that the interlabial pad includes a water permeable inner sheet, that the inner sheet is provided on the garment side surface of the first absorbent body formed in a folded shape, and that the inner sheet and the surface side sheet are bonded so as to enclose the first absorbent body between the inner sheet and the surface side sheet. The inner sheet is shown, for example, in Fig. 4(c), referred as 58.

In contrast, Johnson does not teach or suggest the interlabial pad having an inner sheet. Figures 2 and 3 do not illustrate an inner sheet. Further, one of ordinary skill in the art is aware that the raised cylindroidal centrally disposed portion 3 could not be formed if an inner sheet was present. The inner sheet will exert a force to return the raised pad to a flat state and since the top sheet and the absorbent core are secured by adhesive securement dots 4 at the bottom of the

centrally disposed portion 3, secure adhesion would be prevented if an inner sheet were added. Thus, one of ordinary skill in the art would not be motivated to modify the invention of Johnson to add an inner sheet. Therefore, the present invention recited in amended claim 4 is further distinguishable over Johnson.

Thus, Johnson does not teach or suggest all the elements of claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of the rejection of claim 1 and claims 2, 4 and 10-13, dependent therefrom, based on Johnson.

Further, Farris does not teach or suggest any of the elements lacking from Johnson and present in the claims. Thus, claims 14-17, and 19 and new claims 20-22 are allowable at least for the reasons advanced for amended claim 1.


CONCLUSION

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number indicated below if the Examiner believes any issue can be resolved through either a Supplemental Response or an Examiner's Amendment.

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Respectfully submitted,

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